



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas Begins Chairmanship of the L.A. County Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, who became Chairman of the Board of Supervisors this week, has outlined a list of goals and priorities for his tenure. These include: maintaining a focus on the healthcare, sustaining economic development and job creation, enhancing the transparency of public safety agencies and extending the use of technology and telecommunications in the County. His full statement is below:

I look forward to pursuing a number of goals that will maintain and increase the public's trust and support for their County government, but I would like to touch briefly on several highlights.

The top priority facing the County this year will be the implementation of healthcare reform. The Federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, promises to cover 1.8 million of our County's 2.2 million uninsured Angelenos. The successful implementation of the program, however, will require the efforts of multiple departments and rigorous oversight by the entire Board.

Enhancing public safety will remain a priority. We have an obligation to protect the civil rights of everyone touched by the criminal justice system, which is why I

am committed to the implementation of the County jail violence commission's recommendations. Our Sheriff's Department can and will be a model of transparency and reform.

In the same regard, the realignment efforts and implementation of AB 109 are of utmost concern. Passage by the voters this November of Proposition 30 affords the County a dedicated revenue stream with which we can pursue the business of ensuring public safety; we will institute effective supervision models and the rehabilitative services for those formerly incarcerated, who need to successfully re-enter our communities and avoid re-offending and recidivism.

Reform of our Probation department remains crucial, as well as safeguarding the civil rights and physical wellbeing of its young wards. On that front, it will remain both mine and the Board's priority to pursue an integrated, multi-disciplinary approach to address human trafficking. We have more knowledge now, more data and information about the toll human trafficking is taking on minors caught in our probation system; Supervisor Don Knabe has kept us focused on this issue, and it is one we cannot afford to let go unattended.

Economic development and capital projects are ongoing endeavors. This means a sustained involvement with the creation of low and moderate income housing – an effort that is all the more important given the dissolution of redevelopment agencies. Also, the County must develop long-term options and strategies for the modernization and/or possible replacement of the Hall of Administration.

We must also improve the use of technology Countywide and become a more efficient deliverer of services. The County is fortunate to have a talented administrative staff, and I look forward to working with department leaders on finding ways to create greater efficiencies and generate cost savings.

In closing, I look forward to working collaboratively with my colleagues on the Board. Their stewardship of the County has been exemplary, and each preceding chair has worked hard to keep the region's safety net of services strong and effective.

In my own district, I also look forward to a productive year. We will continue the momentum of building new libraries, community centers, parks, community gardens, as well as medical and transportation infrastructure, including, our most notable projects to date: the construction of the new Crenshaw-to-LAX light rail line and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Hospital.

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